

Heretofore, once she had taken her share—*primo minor leo*—Great Britain defended the neutrality of the rest under some such pretence as “the open door,” free trade, “rights of nations”, etc., but in reality, for the best advantage of her trade; and she enforced her arguments with the full strength of her Navy.

Volumes could be written on the origin and the consequences, near or far, of the new policy, or rather the policy enunciated for the first time in the open by the Foreign Secretary. Let us consider but two of its aspects, which, although related but indirectly to Sir Edward Grey's speech, offer special interest to Canada.

The first is the decisive light thrown by that incident on the situation of the self-governing colonies,—the “sister-nations”, as pompously called by drawing room Empire makers.

POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES TO THE COLONIES

The policy announced by Sir Edward Grey tends to modify deeply the world's situation; it may also increase or cramp the economical prosperity and the territorial safety of the various countries of the Empire.

From the abandonment of protected nations to the sacrifice of colonial rights and pretensions, whether justified or not, the distance is much shorter than might be thought at first,—especially if both policies have the same object in view, that is, to conciliate rival powers.

In so far as Canada is particularly concerned, our immigration laws and tariff regulations, the safety of our trade, ports and frontiers, may be largely affected by this new attitude of the imperial government,—not to speak of the three-sided problem of Anglo-American relations, which, on account of the peculiar situation of Canada, a country British politically, but American geographically, remains forever the most important and the toughest for us to solve.

But for all that, neither Canada nor any of the “sister-nations” of the Empire, can say or do anything whatever to favour or oppose the adoption of that policy.

The speech of the British Foreign Secretary was delivered in an obscure burgh of the United Kingdom—its name was not even transmitted by the cable;—but it was